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## V CORPS SOLDIER-COUPLE HONORS COMRADES IN SONG

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**BAMBERG, Germany** -- It's the story of two Soldiers whose love and passion for music brought them together to create a lifetime duet and affect the lives of others.



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Sgts. 1st Class Jimmie and Dion Kruczek rehearse one of their more than 20 original songs that chronicle their experiences deployed with V Corps' 1st Infantry Division Band.

Sgts. 1st Class Dion and Jimmie Kruczek, who recently returned from a one-year deployment in Iraq with V Corps' 1st Infantry Division Band, are spearheading a country music project that may benefit disabled veterans.

While deployed, the duo began turning Soldiers' experiences into music. Their aim is to record a compact disc of Soldiers' stories produced in Nashville, Tenn. and sung by a major country artist. The proceeds would go to disabled vets from Operation Iraqi Freedom and beyond.

"It's a big undertaking, but we are committed to seeing this through. Our dedication comes from Soldiers' sacrifices and our ability to make a difference. Music has incredible healing abilities," Dion said.

The couple found their way to Nashville producer Rogers Masson via a former military connection.

"We served in the U.S. Army Band at Fort Ord in California and attended Military School of Music together. When Rogers got out of the Army, he went to college and later became a record producer. As a former servicemember, he connected with the project on a personal level, and we appreciate his commitment," Jimmie said.

Masson's interest in assisting the Kruczeks goes beyond his military service. His brother, Maj. Tim Masson, is in the Army and his father was a disabled veteran.

"I spent time with my brother visiting disabled vets," Masson said. "These wounds go way beyond physical. Some were only 18 or 19 years old -- they have their entire lives to live with their wounds. These troops need all the help they can get and the perfect way to do it is through song and music," he said.

Masson stressed that the project has great commercial potential and all should be focused on the project itself.

"We are all in this to give what we can to support our troops who are fighting and dying to support our way of life in America," he said.

The project spawned from Jimmie and Dion playing with the division band "Enter Sandman" in Iraq.

"We met so many people who wanted to share their experiences with us. One Soldier wanted to write a song for his wife because he missed her so much," Dion said.

She went on to write "Call For A Soldier." The song was played on the American Forces Network for his spouse in Bamberg.



PHOTO COURTESY 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION  
An Iraqi boy joins "Enter Sandman," a band composed of Soldiers from V Corps' 1st Infantry Division, during a performance while the band was deployed in Iraq with the division.

Another opportunity came when 1st Infantry Division Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Mike Lembke asked Dion to compose a song for a memorial service honoring Soldiers who had died in Iraq.

"The instrumental piece 'Fallen' pays tribute to those who died during this conflict," she said.

Lembke has written several songs; band member Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Mitchell wrote lyrics for his girlfriend, and an Australian special operations Soldier contributed as well.

The Kruczeks continue to write and ask for contributions to the project. To better coordinate material, a web site, [www.dionkruczek.us](http://www.dionkruczek.us), was created by Sgt. Gary Wilder. It includes music, photos, and videos from Sgt. Sam Metcalf.

"It wouldn't be possible to realize this dream without so many talented people helping out," Jimmie said.

Sitting at the piano, Dion plays and Jimmie works through the vocals for their song, "A Prayer For A Soldier."

"Dear God, please grant me peace as this war comes crashing down ... Make me a brave warrior when I feel I can't drive on, and remember the fallen, for they stood at my side. May they live where the angels sleep amongst the stars in the sky," they sing.

